

B. Amendment to the Claims

Please cancel claims 2, 3, 13 and 14 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Please amend claims 1, 10, 11 and 12 as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A method of etching an organic film, comprising the steps of:

forming an intermediate layer and a patterned resist layer on an organic film;

etching the intermediate layer exposed from the resist layer; and

then etching the organic film using a plasma of a gas,

wherein the intermediate layer comprises a layer comprising aluminum or copper comprised of a metal or metal compound.

2-3. (Cancelled).

4. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the gas is N₂, H₂, a mixed gas of N₂ and H₂, NH₃ or N₂H₄.

5. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the plasma is a surface-wave interfered plasma.

6. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the organic film is a polyaryl ether or fluorinated polyaryl ether.

7. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the organic film comprises a low-dielectric-constant material having a lower dielectric constant than silicon oxide.

8. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the organic film comprises a low-dielectric-constant material having a lower dielectric constant than silicon oxide, and the gas is a gas containing at least one of nitrogen and hydrogen.

9. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the intermediate layer comprises an inorganic insulating layer in contact with the organic film.

10. (Currently Amended) A method of etching an organic film, comprising the steps of:

forming an intermediate layer and a patterned resist layer on an organic low-dielectric-constant film;

etching the intermediate layer exposed from the resist layer; and

then etching the organic low-dielectric-constant film using a plasma of a gas containing either of nitrogen and hydrogen,

wherein the intermediate layer comprises a layer comprising aluminum or copper comprised of a metal or metal nitride.

11. (Currently Amended) A method of producing an element, comprising the steps of:

forming an organic insulating film, an intermediate layer and a patterned resist layer on a substrate;

etching the intermediate layer exposed from the resist layer, and then etching the organic insulating film using a plasma of a gas; and filling with a conductor a portion where the organic insulating film is etched away,

wherein the intermediate layer comprises a layer comprising aluminum or copper comprised of a metal or metal compound.

12. The method according to claim 11, further comprising, after the filling with the conductor, the step of removing the layer comprising aluminum or copper comprised of the metal or metal compound.

13-14. (Cancelled)

15. (Original) The method according to claim 11, wherein the gas is N₂, H₂, a mixed gas of N₂ and H₂, NH₃ or N₂H₄.

16. (Original) The method according to claim 11, wherein the plasma is a surface-wave interfered plasma.

17. (Original) The method according to claim 11, wherein the organic insulating film is a polyaryl ether or fluorinated polyaryl ether.

18. (Original) The method according to claim 11, wherein the organic insulating film comprises a low-dielectric-constant material having a lower dielectric constant than silicon oxide.

19. (Original) The method according to claim 11, wherein the organic insulating film comprises a low-dielectric-constant material having a lower dielectric constant than silicon oxide, and the gas is a gas containing at least one of nitrogen and hydrogen.

20. (Original) The method according to claim 11, wherein the intermediate layer comprises an inorganic insulating layer in contact with the organic insulating film.